

Climate Emergency Facilitation Support

Introduction

The City of Somerville acknowledges the eminent threat of climate change and its potential to critically disrupt economic, social, natural, and cultural systems locally, regionally, and worldwide.

Over the years, both the residents of Somerville and the municipal government have actively engaged to reduce CO2 emissions within city limits. Upon the recommendation of the Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change (CEUCC), the City hired an energy manager/environmental officer and completed an energy performance contract on municipal buildings, and purchased fuel efficient vehicles. The City has been a leader in addressing issues on climate change by creating the Office of Sustainability and Environment to spearhead its efforts to promote sustainability and fight climate change. In 2011, the CEUCC supported the City in adopting the Stretch Energy Code in pursuit of Green Community status with the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and has advised the City to target weatherization of rental properties with its EECBG monies. In addition to the actions of municipal government and the CEUCC, Somerville is home to active citizen groups engaged in sustainable actions across the City. Somerville Climate Action (SCA), a local group formed to advocate for energy efficiency and fight climate change, has made large strides in informing both private citizens and the local business community on the benefits of sustainability. SCA has organized several climate fairs at the local high school, created a B2Green symposium (Business to Green) for local businesses to learn about cutting energy costs, reducing wastes, green purchasing, and most recently organized and hosted a Word-Café style conference for local business, non-profit, and municipal leaders to learn about anticipated impacts of climate change.

In 2011, the Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change delivered a resolution to the Mayor's office called the Climate Emergency Resolution (Please see appendix for a copy). The purpose of the resolution is to galvanize action on climate change adaptation and mitigation (CCAM). The neighboring City of Cambridge had passed a similar order and hosted a Climate Congress that included city leaders and climate activists who gathered to raise awareness about the emergency, assess current climate commitments and responses, and recommend actions to be adopted across the community.

Scope of Work

The City is interested in engaging in a community process focused on climate change adaptation and mitigation in order to fundamentally shift thinking and to integrate CCAM into planning and decision-making across public and private sectors.

Therefore, the City of Somerville is seeking a qualified consultant to facilitate and support: 1) the engagement of key municipal, business, and citizen stakeholders on climate change adaptation and mitigation 2) the development of a shared vision for the city that meets its

climate change adaptation and mitigation goals, and 3) identification of system leverage points for the transformations needed to meet those goals.

We envision a multi-pronged process that would include, at minimum:

- an informational workshop to bring stakeholders up-to-date about Somerville's key vulnerabilities and mitigation opportunities under a changing climate;
- a systems analysis to assess the current realities of how stakeholders' activities intersect with climate change vulnerabilities and mitigation opportunities; develop a shared vision for a city that meets its climate change adaptation and mitigation goals; and identify system leverage points for the major transformation needed to meet those goals.

The City envisions the following phases, tasks and deliverables, however the consultant may propose an alternative structure or approach. It is expected that the consultant will provide a description of the proposed structure, approach, and deliverables.

Phase I: Mobilize Core Stakeholders

The consultant will work with the City of Somerville, CEUCC, and SCA representatives to mobilize and educate the core stakeholders for this effort. The City will identify individuals to participate in the core group of stakeholders, with input from the consultant. The purpose of this phase is to educate the stakeholders about Somerville's climate and energy use systems to lay the groundwork for the rest of the project. The consultant is encouraged to utilize Systems Mapping to help stakeholders visualize opportunities and barriers to action and to prioritize critical issues to ensure that Phase II focuses on the issues that are likely to have the biggest impact. A member of CEUCC and SCA has successfully presented a computer-based simulation of global climate change with college students and climate leaders. This tool will be available as part of Phase I education. The educational activity requires a minimum of 4 to 5 hours for preparation and execution.

Specific aspects of Phase I may include the following tasks:

1. Problem identification – What are the key climate issues for Somerville
2. Systems Mapping of the relationships of climate and energy to the City of Somerville
3. Identifying strategic points of highest leverage and policy options that could positively capitalize on those points.

Deliverable: Summary document of key findings, including identifying key climate issues, stakeholders in the City and strategic points of highest leverage .

Phase II: Engage City Departments to Identify and Create Points of Change

This phase builds off the issues identified in Phase I and reaches out to engage a broader audience of municipal leaders. The purpose of this phase is to help Somerville department heads and other key decision makers see their daily responsibilities through a Climate Change Lens, and thus make decisions and allocate resources proactively with this Lens in mind. Consultant will be required to meet with appropriate officials in city departments to identify and create points of change. This phase is similar in approach to Phase I above and may include the same tasks. In their proposals, consultants are encouraged to flesh out a general framework and tasks for Phase II. It is understood that Phase II activities are likely to change once Phase I activities are complete.

Deliverable: Summary document of key findings, including a matrix of the City's key climate issues and relevant City departments.

Phase III: Plan for future engagement of wider community of stakeholders

This phase links the past work of the City, the Commission and Somerville Climate Action (e.g. Climate Café) to the issues identified and systems maps that emerged from Phases I and II to create a plan to engage the wider community. The goal of engaging the wider community is 1) to help catalyze a shift in perception necessary to take actions towards mitigation and adaptation, and 2) to gain community support for the implementation of policy and programming created at the City level through the Climate Change Lens. The consultant will re-group with the core stakeholders to identify specific and concrete next steps such as potential policy or programming.

The City is interested in concrete outcomes from this project. For example, in addition to the deliverables described above, the City would like the consultant to provide a plan for tracking quantitative and qualitative outputs and outcomes as a result of participation in the facilitation process. In other words, the City is interested in metrics. For example, if the City were to seek funding for additional CCAM work, then it would be useful and compelling to have metrics resulting from the climate facilitation process described in this RFP.

Deliverable: Plan of concrete next steps to engage a wider audience including a plan for ensuring that future City staff understand and operate through the Climate Change Lens. Plan should include tools such as specific checklists customized to each department to encourage a climate-sensitive approach. Deliverables for Phase III may be modified based on the findings of Phase I and II.